

What's On Tap



AT THE SOQUEL CREEK WATER DISTRICT

New Water Rates In Effect

On February 16, 2016, our Board of Directors held a public hearing on water rate changes. The costs to operate a water system are driven by the number of customers billed for water service, and only reduce slightly when customers use less water. However, water is billed based on how much is used, so customer conservation - while essential to preserving our overdrafted groundwater supply - decreases the financial resources available to operate and maintain the water system. The District adopted a three-year series of rate increases designed to ensure financial stability during periods of declining consumption while meeting the cost of service requirements of Proposition 218.

On March 1, 2016, the following rates will become effective (assuming the District remains in a Stage 3 Groundwater Emergency):

Monthly Fire Service Charge		
Meter Size	Current	3/1/2016
1-1/2 inch	\$4.96	\$8.49
2-inch	\$4.96	\$15.09
2-1/2 inch	\$4.96	\$27.36
3-inch	\$9.31	\$33.02
4-inch	\$15.52	\$59.43
6-inch	\$31.04	\$132.07
8-inch	\$49.66	\$226.41

Monthly Service Charge					
Meter Size	Current	SFR Single-Family Residential	MFR Multi-Family Residential	Commercial	Irrigation/Outdoor Use
5/8-inch restricted	\$24.83	\$13.13	\$8.88	\$15.12	
5/8-inch*	\$24.83	\$26.27	\$17.76	\$30.25	\$47.99
3/4-inch**	\$37.24	\$26.27	\$26.63	\$45.37	\$71.98
1-inch**	\$62.07	\$26.27	\$44.39	\$75.61	\$119.97
1-1/2 inch**	\$124.15	\$26.27	\$79.90	\$136.11	\$215.95
2-inch	\$198.64		\$155.36	\$264.65	\$419.90
3-inch	\$372.45		\$292.97	\$499.05	\$791.82
4-inch	\$620.75		\$390.63	\$665.41	\$1,055.75
6-inch	\$1,241.50		\$1,065.36	\$1,814.74	\$2,879.33
8-inch	\$1,241.50		\$1,420.48	\$2,419.66	\$3,839.11

*Most single-family residential (SFR) customers have a 5/8-inch meter.

**Except for SFR, whose current service charge is \$24.83 regardless of meter size

Water Quantity Charge					
Tier	Current	SFR	MFR	Commercial	Irrigation/Outdoor Use
SFR Tier 1 (1-3 units)	\$5.47	\$5.50			
SFR Tier 2 (4-7 units)	\$9.57	\$7.27			
SFR Tier 3 (8-13 units)	\$15.04	\$16.75			
SFR Tier 4 (14+ units)*	\$21.87	\$35.09			
MFR Tier 1 (1-2 units)**	\$7.66		\$5.50		
MFR Tier 2 (3-5 units)**	\$9.71		\$7.27		
MFR Tier 3 (6-10 units)**	\$11.76		\$16.75		
MFR Tier 4 (11+ units)**	\$13.94		\$35.09		
Flat Rate	\$9.64			\$8.29	\$8.29

*Tier 4 threshold decreased from 16 units to 14 units

**MFR tier thresholds apply per dwelling unit

In addition to a rate increase, a new rate classification is being added for irrigation or outdoor use connections. Customers in this rate classification will pay a higher service charge because of the demands their summertime use places on the water system. Fire service connections will also see a service charge increase due to the larger water system infrastructure size needed for higher flows if a fire were to occur. More information on the newly-adopted rates and fees is available on our website at:

www.soquelcreekwater.org/customer-service/current-rates-and-fees

To learn more about how this will affect you, please give us a call at 831-475-8500 and our billing staff will be happy to help determine how your individual bill will change.

2015 Year in Review

In the water business, nothing ever stops, so it is important to highlight accomplishments as you go. Here are a few of the important things that came about as a result of our (and your) hard work in 2015:

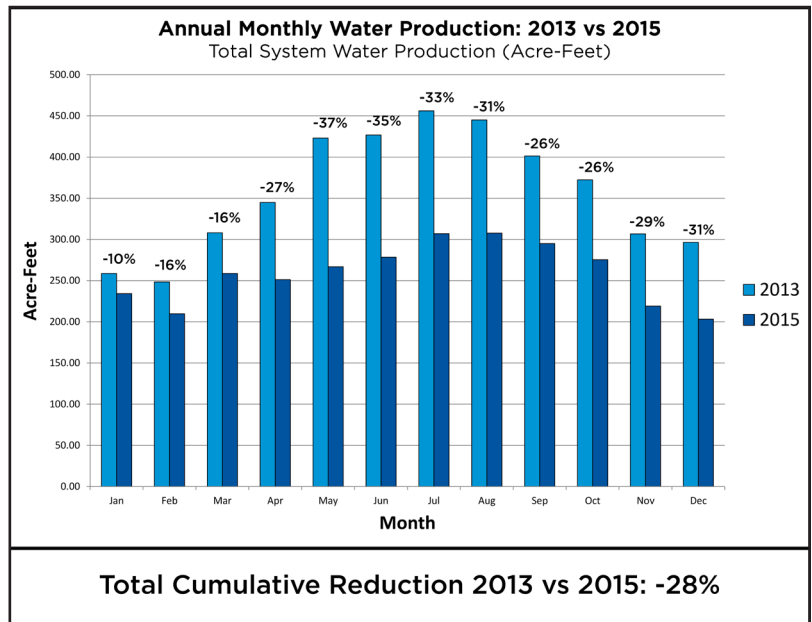
1. Customers significantly exceeded the State's demand reduction target of 8%, ending up at a cumulative reduction of 28% compared to 2013. This was primarily accomplished through voluntary measures (e.g., increased conservation outreach, home and business water-wise surveys, rebates, WaterSmart Home Water Reports, etc.) coupled with continued water waste enforcement.

2. Developed an action-oriented Community Water Plan based on community input. This long-range plan serves as the District's roadmap to meet our goal of sustainability by 2040.

3. Completed construction of the new O'Neill Ranch well, treatment plant, and intertie (with the City of Santa Cruz) as part of our Well Master Plan.

4. Completed construction of two new pump stations to facilitate movement of potable water within the District and increase overall system reliability and flexibility.

5. Started, and now have nearly completed, a feasibility study on groundwater replenishment with



In 2015, your efforts produced a water savings of 28% compared to 2013. Thank you.

advanced purification of recycled water. In addition, the District developed a Cooperative Working Agreement with the County Sanitation Department to lay the groundwork for potential future recharge and/or recycled water projects.

6. Commissioned the first permitted hexavalent chromium treatment facility (for drinking water) in the state, reducing concentrations to well below new state maximum contaminant level (MCL) requirements, and finalized plans for a facility that is expected to come on line in 2017.

7. Developed a 5-year Pilot Study/Cooperative Water Purchase Agreement with the City of Santa Cruz.

8. Soquel Creek Water District and Central Water District expanded a working group to include the City and County of Santa Cruz and three private well owner representatives, then worked together with those organizations and representatives to form an agency called the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency (SCMCGA), which will apply to become the basin's Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA).

Our Board of Directors meetings are open to everyone and comments from the public are heard at each meeting. To view our upcoming meetings schedule and board packets visit www.soquelcreekwater.org/who-we-are/board-meetings

Spotlight: Working Together to Fix Leaks

When a routine meter read led to the detection of a 4,000 gallon per day leak at a Soquel apartment complex, owner Wanda Braschi was immediately notified. There is no outdoor irrigation, and after each tenant checked their apartment the large leak remained a mystery. The District's Water Conservation Specialist Roy Sikes performed a free water-wise house call for each unit, checking for leaks and installing water-efficient faucet aerators and showerheads. Finally, Wanda hired a local leak detection professional who found the leak underground beneath a patio. Plumbers fixed the leaking pipe and the high water use and bill immediately plummeted.



Customer Wanda Braschi, right, and Soquel Creek Water District's Conservation Specialist Roy Sikes near a patched cement patio at the Soquel apartment complex Braschi owns where a large underground leak was recently found and fixed.

"We had to be diligent to find it. The water district worked really well with me," Braschi said. She also took advantage of a District rebate to purchase more efficient washing machines and installed sub-meters to better understand where water is being used in her 22-unit complex.

District staff notify about 400 customers each month of suspected leaks. When a leak is on the customer's side of the water meter, it is their responsibility to locate and repair. District staff provide ongoing support until the issue is resolved. If your monthly meter read indicates 24 hours of continuous water use or is significantly higher than usual, we'll notify you right away. We support customers by providing:

Rules of Water Waste Still in Effect

Despite the recent rains, we still have a long-term water shortage, which means we need to keep conserving.

To view our Rules of Water Waste, please visit <http://www.soquelcreekwater.org/conserving-water/our-water-waste-rules>

- Free toilet leak detection tablets at our office: 5180 Soquel Drive in Soquel
- Free water-wise housecalls to confirm leaks and give advice: 831-475-8501 x146
- Helpful online resources including using your water meter to identify a leak: www.soquelcreekwater.org

What's On Tap is an in-house publication printed quarterly for the customers of our District. Forward your comments to the editor at P.O. Box 1550, Capitola, CA 95010.

Staff Spotlight

Ron Duncan Appointed as General Manager

Soquel Creek Water District's board of directors appointed Ron Duncan as the agency's new general manager at their meeting on Tuesday, February 2. Duncan has been serving as the interim general manager since April of 2015. He has worked for the District for thirteen years, mostly as its conservation and customer service field manager.

"Ron has proven his leadership skills, understanding of local water and the community, and commitment to solving our water supply issues," said Board President Dr. Bruce Daniels.



Recently appointed General Manager Ron Duncan has worked for the District for thirteen years.

Ron has lived in the Santa Cruz area for 20 years with his wife and two sons. His wife teaches art at Mountain School Elementary. He is an avid surfer and cyclist, and incorporates his love of the natural environment into many District projects. Ron is passionate about working with and supporting individual employees, teams, and departments to ensure that the District, and all of its parts, can excel and flourish. He is ready to start this new chapter as leader of the organization.

"Ron has proven his leadership skills, understanding of local water and the community, and commitment to solving our water supply issues."

- Board President Bruce Daniels



5180 Soquel Drive
P.O. Box 1550
Capitola, CA 95010

Phone: 831-475-8500
Fax: 831-475-4291
Email: custserv@soquelcreekwater.org

More information is available at:
www.soquelcreekwater.org

Other ways to connect with us!



Before coming to the District, Duncan worked in the public sector for the Santa Cruz Port District and in the private sector as a hydrogeologic consultant. He holds a Bachelors degree in geology, a Masters degree in hydrology, and is a licensed geologist in California. He also recently completed a Masters degree in Business Administration and an Executive Masters degree in Positive Leadership and Strategy as part of a fellowship program.

"This has been a life goal of mine," Duncan said. "My aim is to obtain a supplemental water supply as we continue providing high quality water and outstanding customer service while keeping the District financially sound." He noted "It's an honor to work with such a professional staff, dedicated Board, and engaged community. I'm grateful."